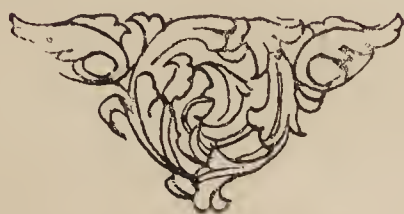


WESTHUGHTON
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL




ANNUAL
REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER
OF HEALTH AND
SANITARY
INSPECTOR.



Year Ending Dec. 31st, 1925.



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1405.



*To the Chairman and Members
of the
Westhoughton Urban District Council.*



GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in submitting for your consideration my Annual Report on the health, sanitary condition, and administration of the district during the year 1925.

In accordance with instructions of the Ministry of Health at the end of each fifth year a review of these subjects should be made with reference to the preceding period of five years.

This is the first of such reports.

Review of statistics shews that the birth-rate is slightly less than last year.

There is a small increase in the death-rate, this being 12.6 against 11.8.

The number of notifiable diseases is identical with that of last year.

The Infantile death-rate is identical with that of last year, viz., 82 per 1000 births. The rate for the last five years is 101. The rate for England and Wales is 75 for 1925.

Employment has shewn little if any improvement, and as previously pointed out the low wage-earning capacity must have a prejudicial effect on the health of the people.

The local District Nursing Association and Care Committee for Tuberculosis sufferers have again carried on excellent work.

A number of patients from the district have been admitted to the various hospitals at Manchester, Bolton and Wigan.

Housing of the people continues to be a very urgent and difficult problem.

As will be seen from details in the report, a number of houses have been erected under the Council's Subsidy Scheme.

The Council has also proceeded with the erection of 66 houses on the Wingates Site and these are nearing completion.

It is obvious that still further provision must be made and the question is engaging the attention of the Housing Committee.

A number of houses have been renovated following inspection and notice of defects to owners.

The number of closets converted to the water system was 325 making a total for the last five years of 1408.

Important events during the last five years have been the opening of the War Memorial Child Welfare Centre and School Clinic and the provision of a covered Public Market.

The extension of the tramway system from the Bolton boundary to the centre of Westhoughton, and the running of buses through the district in several directions can only make for improved convenience and the public good.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area—5560 acres.

Estimated population—16,820.

Rateable value—£75,921.

No. of inhabited houses (1921)—3,318.

No. of families or separate occupiers (1921)—3,851.

Sum represented by a Penny Rate—£310.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS, 1925.

Births—

Legitimate 283—males 141; females 142.

Illegitimate 7—males 2; females 5.

Birth-rate 17.2.

Deaths 213—males 108; females 105.

Death-rate 12.6

No. of women dying in (or in consequence of) child-birth—

From Sepsis —

From other causes 2

Deaths of infants under one year of age:—

Total 26; legitimate 24; illegitimate 2.

Deaths from Measles (all ages) 2

Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) —

Deaths from Diarrhœa (under 2 years) 3

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS.

Year	Birth-rate	Death-rate	Phthisis Death-rate	Respiratory Death-rate	Rate of deaths under 1 year to 1000 births
1925 	17.2	12.6	0.29	2.19	82
1924 	18.3	11.8	0.12	2.2	82
Mean of 5 years : 1920—1924 	20.4	12.3	0.45	2.29	101
Increase or decrease in 1925 on previous year	—1.1	+0.8	+0.17	—0.01	nil
Increase or decrease in 1925 on five years' avg	—3.2	+0.3	—0.16	—0.10	—19

BIRTHS.

The number of births registered during the year was 290. Of these 143 were males and 147 females. This is equal to a birth-rate of 17.2 as compared with 18.3 last year, and 20.4 for

the last five years. The birth-rate for England and Wales last year was 18.3. There were seven illegitimate births.

Year	Total Births	Males	Females	Birth-rate	County Urban Birth-rate	England and Wales
1925	290	143	147	17.2		18.3
1924	304	164	140	18.3	16.54	18.8
1923	299	145	154	18.3	17.29	19.7
1922	307	170	137	19.0	18.11	20.6
1921	357	192	175	23.1	21.06	22.4

DEATHS.

During the year there were registered 213 deaths—equal to a death-rate of 12.6 per 1000 per annum. Last year the rate was 11.8 and the average for the last five years, 12.3. The death-rate for England and Wales was 12.2.

Year	Deaths under one year	Total Deaths	Death-rate	County Urban Death-rate	England and Wales
1925	24	213	12.6		12.2
1924	25	196	11.8	12.53	12.2
1923	31	201	12.3	12.44	11.6
1922	34	219	13.6	13.23	12.9
1921	43	209	13.1	12.31	12.1

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

During 1925 there were registered 24 deaths of infants under one year.

This is equal to an Infantile death-rate of 82—exactly the same as last year which as I then pointed out was the lowest on record for the district.

It is little more than half the rate of 15 to 20 years ago and furnishes evidence of the value of health improvements both in a general direction and in the special efforts made under the scheme of Maternity and Child Welfare.

The rate for the five years period, 1921—1925 was 101.

The last rate available for the County area of Lancashire is 84, and for England and Wales 75.

Analysis of the Registrar's figures shews that of the 24 deaths three failed to survive the first day of life, while seven died during the first week. Exactly half the total were lost during the first month while five lived to the period 9—12 months.

As regards the causes of death 10 of the 24 were certified as due to Premature birth and allied conditions. Four died as the result of convulsions and the same number were lost from chest affections.

Six of the total number died in hospital.

Two deaths were those of illegitimate children.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

An excellent year was experienced in connection with the working of this scheme.

The general health of the babies was good and we escaped serious epidemic illness.

The mothers for some time had been shewing increased interest in the work at the Centre until by the middle of the year the attendance was too large to be satisfactorily dealt with at one session.

Consequently we commenced a second Centre on Tuesday afternoons.

Both these days have been most successful.

The average attendance on Thursdays was 41 and that on Tuesdays 23.

As the attendance of both Health Visitors at each Centre is absolutely necessary the time available for the home visiting is correspondingly curtailed and it was found necessary to somewhat re-organise this work.

I believe the mothers fully appreciate the help offered to them.

The children are weighed and medically examined each visit. Appropriate advice is given and minor treatment suggested. In many cases reference is made to the local doctors while for suitable cases the scheme provides for admission to hospital. More than two-thirds of the children have been medically examined each week.

I have referred above to the satisfactory Infantile death-rate. In estimating the real importance of this one must take into account the situation and type of district, nature of industry, housing conditions, degree of prosperity of the workpeople, etc. On so doing it must be agreed that we are not favourably circumstanced. Yet our rate of 82 (same as last year) compares favourably with that of 75 for the whole of England and Wales.

The sale of dried milk, Virol etc., has proved helpful to the mothers.

A number of cases have been assisted by the granting of milk. Discreet enquiry is made into the circumstances of applicants.

This Child Welfare work has tremendously increased during the last five years. We have grown from one small Centre held under difficulties at the Town Hall to two large Centres in the convenient and well equipped premises at Sunny Bank.

The voluntary lady workers have increased in number and rendered excellent service for which thanks are due.

The following is a summary of details in connection with the work :—

Total births registered	290
Total births notified	288
Total number of children enrolled at Welfare Centre	192
Average weekly attendance (Tuesday) ...	23

Average weekly attendance (Thursday) ...	41
Total visits (birth enquiries)	308
Total visits to children under 1 year	4218
Total visits to children over 1 year	1372
Total visits to expectant mothers	270
Sanitary defects reported	12
Medical assistance advised and obtained	14
No. of still-births reported	11
Rate of deaths under 1 year per 1000 births	82

In connection with the Maternity department a scheme was last year inaugurated by which according to a graduated income scale of payment a bed could be reserved in the Maternity wards of Haslam, Townleys or St. Mary's Hospitals.

A number of enquiries were received regarding this arrangement which brings one into touch with the expectant mother and helps us in our ante-natal efforts.

It is almost certain that as mothers experience the benefits to be obtained under this section and the advantages of skilled attention in the Maternity ward compared with the lack of accommodation at home the number of applications will progressively increase.

During 1925 three cases were admitted for confinement.

ADMINISTRATION.

During the year the following cases were admitted to the Infectious Hospital:—

Scarlet Fever	20
Enteric Fever	8
Diphtheria	11

The Smallpox Hospital at Rogers Farm is always available for admission of patients.

There were no cases during 1925.

The water supply is from the reservoirs of Bolton Corporation. Regular analysis has shewn the quality to be satisfactory.

Arrangements obtain for chemical and bacteriological work which is carried out at the laboratories of Manchester University.

33 specimens were submitted for examination and report.

The Motor Ambulance service has been efficiently worked by contract.

Provision is made for a day and night service.

The following is a summary of the journeys undertaken by the Ambulance:—

Bolton	Manchester	Wigan	Local	Total Journeys
80	19	3	6	108

The Infectious Hospital motor ambulance is provided for cases of Infectious illness.

ZYMOTIC DISEASE.

There were notified 98 case of Infectious Diseases (including 35 case of Pneumonia) compared with 97 last year.

The number of cases has been fairly constant during the last five years as will be seen from the following:—

1925	1924	1923	1922	1921
98	97	70	87	77

The Ward distribution of the principal Infectious diseases was as follows:—

Disease	Central	North	South	East	Hulton	Total
Scarlet Fever ...	7	10	2	9	—	28
Diphtheria ...	6	4	1	3	2	16
Enteric Fever ...	5	1	—	2	—	8

The following is a summary of cases occurring during the year:—

Disease	CASES NOTIFIED.												Total Deaths	Total cases re- mvd to Hospital
	Years.													
	Total Cases at all ages	Under 1	1—2	2—3	3—5	5— 10	10— 15	15— 20	20— 25	25— 35	35— 45	45 & Ovr		
Diphtheria	16			1	4	6	4		1				1	11
Erysipelas... ..	4						1	1				2		
Scarlet Fever	28		1	1	2	11	7	2	3			1		20
Enteric Fever	8						3	2	2			1		8
Puerperal Fever... ..	3								3					
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	2	2												
Pneumonia	35		3	1	3	9	8		4	1		6	17	
Whooping Cough														
Diarrhœa (under 2 years)													3	
Enceph. Leth.	2		1							1				
Totals	98	2	5	3	9	26	23	5	13	2	10	21		39

Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Notified	Cases Treated		Vision Un-imp'ed	Vision Imp'ed	Total Bli'dn'ss	Deaths
		At Home	Hospital				
	2	2		2	—	—	—

TUBERCULOSIS.

During the year there were notified 35 cases of this disease. Of these 15 were Respiratory and 20 of Non-Respiratory type.

The notification of this disease appears to have been efficient. The affected houses have been thoroughly disinfected and precautions taken to prevent the further spread of the disease.

Below will be found the number of cases notified during the last five years:—

YEAR.	RESPIRATORY	NON-RESPIRATORY
1925	15	20
1924	4	8
1923	15	12
1922	12	12
1921	16	8

ADOPTIVE PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS, ETC.

The following have been adopted by the Council:—

The Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890.

The Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907.

Infectious Diseases Prevention Act, 1890.

Bye-laws concerning—

Common Lodging Houses, 1873.

Slaughter-houses, 1873.

Nuisances, 1873.

Cleansing of Footways, 1873.

Streets and Buildings, 1902, 1917.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

Scavenging and Removal of House Refuse:—

This work is carried out by the Local Authority and has been generally satisfactory.

A re-organisation of the work with concentration of the workmen in an area has made for greater efficiency.

The refuse is disposed of by depositing in tips.

Transport is mainly by motor-wagons.

For some years a portion of the refuse has been dealt with by Pulverising, but owing to difficulties in disposing of the product this method has not been in use during the year.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The system of sewage disposal has been mainly satisfactory.

The method is one of precipitation and filtration.

The district is served by seven sections of sewers, and the sewage is treated by chemicals with lime precipitation and irrigation.

The first section drains the whole of Daisy Hill and Leigh Road, and is delivered at Rogers Farm; the second section drains Wearish Lane, Hart Common, Market Street, Church Street, Wigan Road, Bolton Road, Park Road, Manchester Road and part of Chorley Road, and is also delivered at Rogers Farm.

The sewage having first been mixed with sulphate of iron, and then with lime, is led into precipitating tanks, each with a capacity of 250,000 gallons. After precipitation the effluent is distributed by three revolving sprinklers on to filter beds. The effluent has been frequently taken for analysis by the Mersey and Irwell Water Board Inspector and good results obtained.

The sewage from the third section is delivered at Dog Holes Farm (21 acres), and is led on to the land and treated by irrigation alone.

The sewage from the fourth section (Hart Common and Marsh Brook) is delivered at Marsh Brook Farm (14 acres) and treated by irrigation.

The fifth section draining part of Hulton Ward now including Hulton Lane portion is connected with the sewer of the first portion.

The sixth section draining the New Brook Road portion of Hulton Ward, is delivered into the sewers of the Atherton Urban District Council, and treated by the Leigh and Atherton Joint Sewage Board at a yearly charge of £1 per house.

The seventh section drains the Dicconson Lane portion of North Ward, and is treated at a small works comprising detritus and septic tanks with a percolating filter.

The sewage system has worked well during the year.

CLOSETS AND ASHPITS.

Privy Middens: No. of middens, 690. No. of closets attached to these middens, 733.

No. of Pail Closets, 0. No. of Dry Ashpits (excluding middens) 650.

No. of Fresh Water Closets, 2289.

No. of Portable Receptacles for Refuse, 1359.

No. of Waste-water Closets, 116.

No. of Privy Closets converted during 1925 to Fresh Water Closets, 325.

No. of Pail Closets converted, 0.

No. of Waste-water Closets converted, 0.

The Council contributes half the cost of conversion of Privy Closets to Fresh Water Closets.

Marked progress has been made with the work of abolishing the Privy system during the last five years, when the number converted to the Fresh-water system has been:—

1925	1924	1923	1922	1921
325	215	285	323	260

The Council have for some time appreciated the danger to health which must exist in houses provided with the insanitary privy arrangement and consistent efforts have been made to remedy this.

The number of such middens has been reduced from 2141 in 1921 to 733 at the end of 1925.

As regards the remaining 733, difficulties regarding sewer accommodation will be met with in some cases, but it is the firm resolve to continue this most important improvement.

SCHOOLS.

During the year the sanitary condition of the schools has been generally satisfactory.

During the last five years many improvements have been effected. Where pail closets existed these have been converted to the water system, and in many cases of insufficiency the numbers have been increased to the necessary standard.

Lavatory and cloak-room accommodation improvements are at present being carried out at one school while the play-ground in one instance has been completely flagged.

As pointed out last year the condition of the play-grounds at several of the schools requires attention.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

These have been regularly inspected and apart from minor defects which were remedied their condition has been satisfactory.

BAKEHOUSES.

There are 18 of these in the district. They have been regularly inspected and their condition found to be satisfactory.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACT AND MILK AND CREAM REGULATIONS.

Sampling has been carried out by the Inspector.

43 samples of Milk and one informal sample of Butter were taken.

Two prosecutions for deficiency in Milk fat, fined £5 and costs and £2 and costs respectively. ~~Three Milk sellers warned costs and £2 and costs respectively.~~ Three Milk sellers were warned for deficiency.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS and MILKSHOPS.

(Milk and Dairies Act, 1922, etc.)

These have been periodically inspected and following the special appeal by circular which was made last year an improvement has been noticeable.

In several instances structural and yard area improvements have been carried out.

There are registered 72 cowkeepers and 73 retailers of milk.

In one instance the sanitary condition was found unsatisfactory on the occasion of more than one visit and notice issued to the owner that his registration was in danger of being withheld by the Local Authority. Following a further interview an improvement was brought about and has since been maintained.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.

The slaughter-houses have been frequently inspected.

To conform with the Public Health Meat Regulations, 1924, each butcher is now required to give notice of time of intended slaughter. Following such notice more than 164 visits have been paid by the Inspector for purposes of meat inspection.

The sanitary condition has shewn improvement in most cases. Under the same regulations an attempt was made to minimise the danger arising from dust and fly contamination by exposure of the

meat in the retail shops. An appeal was also made against the practice of handling of meat by prospective customers.

The condition of one meatshop was considered unsatisfactory and as the result of action by the Inspector an improvement is reported.

There are 11 slaughter-houses in the district.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

In addition to the Medical Officer of Health the staff consists of a well-qualified Sanitary Inspector, a part-time Clerk and two Health Visitors, having respectively the following qualifications:

A. W.—Hospital training and C.M.B.

H. M.—Health Visitors' Certificate (Royal Sanitary Institute) and C.M.B.

HOUSING.

Reference has already been made to the shortage of houses and the attempts being made by the Local Authority, both as regards providing new houses and the renovation of existing property.

The following is a summary of housing details:—

Housing Statistics for the year, 1925:—

No. of new houses erected during the year:—

(a) Total (including number given separately under (b) 42

(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts—

(i.) By the Local Authority —

(ii.) By other bodies or persons 49

No. of houses in course of erection under Council's

building scheme 66

Financial assistance for purposes of increasing housing accommodation :—

Have any advances been made during 1925—

(a) By Loans? Yes. No. 21. Amount of loans £9,610.

(b) By subsidy? Yes. No. 47. Amount of subsidy £4,700.

Unfit Dwelling-houses

Inspection :—

- (1) Total No. of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)—109.
- (2) No. of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925—85.
- (3) No. of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation—3.
- (4) No. of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under (3)) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation—6.

Remedy of Defects without service of formal Notices—

No. of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers—11.

Action under Statutory Powers—

A.—Proceedings under Section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925.

1.—No. of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs—20.

2.—No. of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—

(a) By owners, 18.

(b) By Local Authority in default of owners, 2.

3.—No. of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close—0.

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts—

1.—No. of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied—10.

2.—No. of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:—

(a) By owners, 21.

(b) By Local Authority in default of owners, 0.

C.—Proceedings under Sections 11, 14, and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925—

1.—No. of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders—3.

2.—No. of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made—3.

3.—No. of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit—4.

4.—No. of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made—0.

5.—No. of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders—0.

D.—No. of houses demolished voluntarily by owners, or converted to workshops, etc.—0.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

WILLIAM H. LEIGH.

May 1st, 1926.

Report of SANITARY INSPECTOR

FOR THE FIVE YEARS 1921-1925.



*To the Chairman and Members of the
Westhoughton Urban District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

In reviewing the Sanitary Improvements for the above-mentioned period, the work of Closet Conversion has been consistently and steadily carried out, as the total number of 1408 bear evidence. The work has entailed much time in supervision, and has been entirely carried out by this Department.

In many instances new drains and sewers have had to be laid, and structural alterations and new closets built, this has necessitated many interviews with owners and agents, and with the exception of one case, "where a Magistrates Order had to be obtained for power of Entry," there has not been the slightest objection, while many householders have welcomed the change, and spoken highly of the improved conditions, both from a sanitary point of view as well as a great convenience, as the Council have wisely insisted on a separate W.C. to each house.

In carrying out the above, nearly 3000 visits have been made, in addition to office work in making out the necessary Notices, &c.

It is expected that at the above rate of progress, the remaining privies will be converted in the next two years.

Nearly 500 visits have been made to blocked and new drains.

The inspection of property and re-inspection during repairs, and interviewing owners, &c., has taken up considerable time, and much improvement in the condition of property has taken place.

The inspection of Food and Slaughter-houses has been regularly carried out, the amount of food condemned was 596 lbs.

229 samples of Milk have been taken, and only in two cases have proceedings been necessary, these were for deficiency in Milk Fat, and in both cases a conviction was obtained, warnings have been given in two or three instances, where the circumstances did not warrant a prosecution.

A marked improvement has taken place in the quality of the milk sold in the district, this is no doubt due to the regular taking of samples.

There are 72 Cowkeepers on the Register, the Cowsheds and Dairies are regularly inspected.

The Superintendence of the cleansing, removal, and disposal of refuse requires a considerable amount of attention in a District which contains over 5,500 acres, and comprises a fair number of houses on the extreme limits, as well as in the centre of the Town, at the commencement of the above period two 30 cwt. Vulcan Motor Wagons, one 1 ton Ford Wagon, and one Cart and Horse were employed, the work is now carried out by three 1 ton Ford Wagons and one Cart and Horse. All bins are emptied weekly, and dry ashpits and privies monthly. The following figures show the decrease in the Sanitary account for the last five years, notwithstanding that about 400 houses have been erected during this period:—

The estimate for 1921 was £3565.				
„	„	„	1922	„ £3235.
„	„	„	1923	„ £2885.
„	„	„	1924	„ £2650.
„	„	„	1925	„ £2410.

A report of the work performed by the above is presented to the Sanitary Committee every month, showing the amount of refuse removed by each Motor and Cart, as near as can be ascertained by periodical weighing and an average taken, (as there

are no means of weighing every load) the cost per ton for removal, and the cost per ton for labour, the days worked, and the petrol consumed, so that a check is made on the amount of work the men perform and the cost. The refuse is now disposed of by tipping on three tips, pulverizing having been discontinued during the last year owing to the small amount of suitable refuse being available. 511 visits were paid to the pulverizer, including the sale of the refuse, and supervising the loading of wagons on the railway.

There have been also visits to Infectious Cases, and seeing to removal and disinfection, interviews with various owners and agents, investigations of complaints received, supervising the upkeep and repairs to motors, and the usual office routine, the making of special reports, &c., all of which it is impossible to keep a tabulated account.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

F. J. A. GREEN, A.M.I.S.E., Cert. R. San. Inst.
Sanitary Inspector and Cleansing Supt.

